

Box 1377

No. 29.

REPORT  
ON  
MEDICAL EDUCATION  
TO THE  
MEDICAL SOCIETY OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

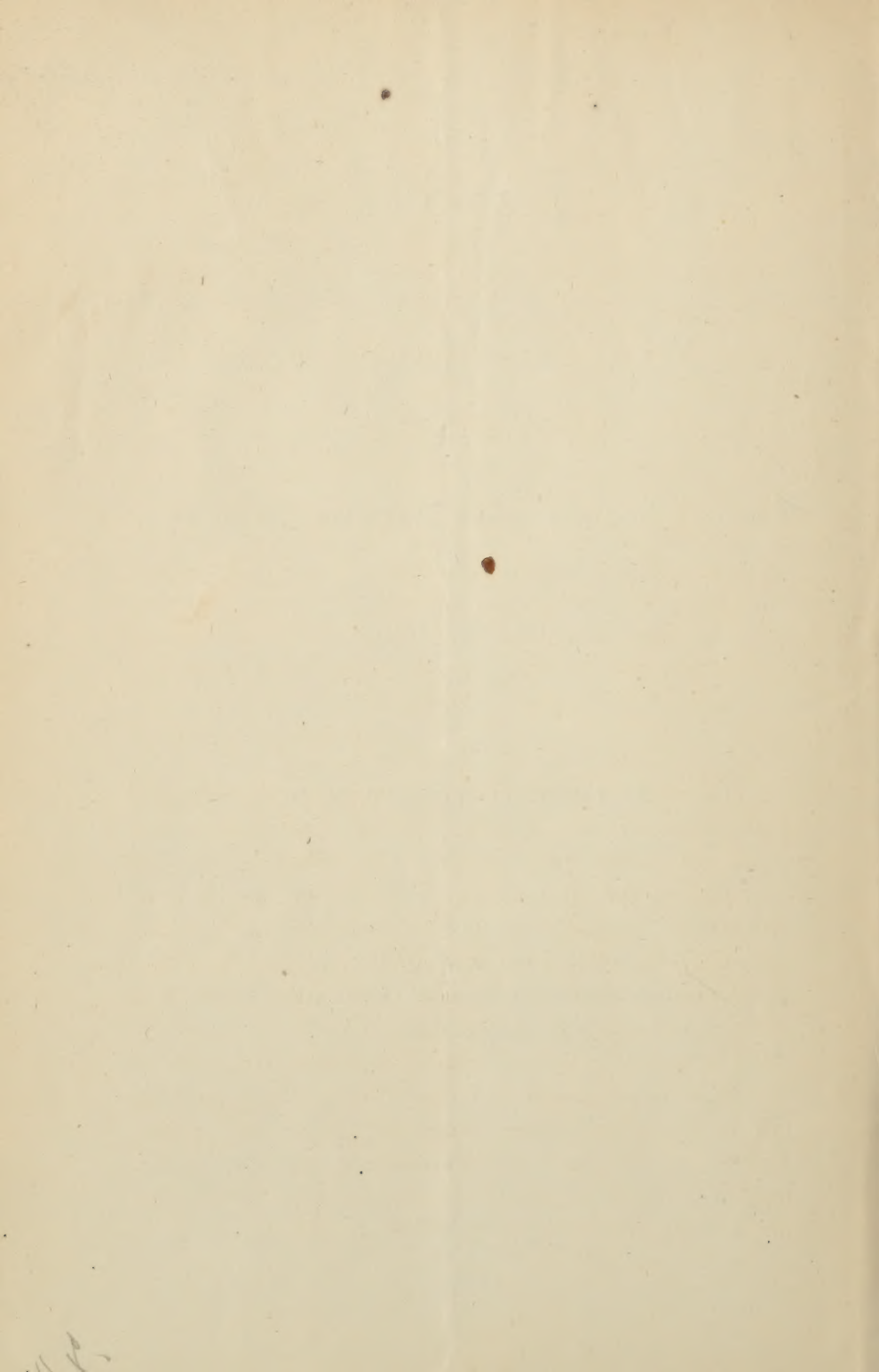
APRIL 18TH, 1877.

By  
ARTHUR B. STOUT, M. D.

READ BY  
JAS. M. BROWNE, M. D., U. S. N.  
CHAIRMAN OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON MEDICAL EDUCATION  
AS A SUPPLEMENT TO HIS REPORT.

---

SAN FRANCISCO:  
EDWARD BOSQUI & Co., PRINTERS.  
1877.



## REPORT.

---

"BUT AT THE BASIS OF ALL PROSPERITY FOR THAT (THE SOUTH),  
AS WELL AS FOR EVERY OTHER PART OF THE COUNTRY,  
IS IMPROVEMENT OF THE INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL  
CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE. UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE  
SHOULD REST UPON UNIVERSAL EDUCATION."

—Hayes' Inaugural, March 5, 1877.

However extendedly the subject of Medical Education in the United States may have been discussed, some progressive suggestions may yet, perhaps, prove interesting. However cheap and quickly-gotten diplomas may be desirable and popular, we must insist that this new age of learning demands a far higher grade of Medical Education than was deemed necessary forty years ago.

The necessity for reiterating arguments is, that the comprehensive essays and discussions already written fail to obtain the desired circulation among the people. Buried in ephemeral periodicals, they come not to the masses. Their inspiration is consumed by those who are already abundantly inspired.

Genius alone, unaided by Education, can have but a feeble flight. Innate intellect may exalt a self-taught Poet—but cannot alone constitute an Astronomer. The diamond in the rough may pass forever unheeded, but not until the friction of the wheel of labor and study shall have elicited its latent fire, will its polish reflect its merit.

We may properly commence the investigation by asking—What constitutes a National System of Education? As what is termed the natural classification in Botany has superseded the Linnæan, so, in all departments of learning—a natural sequence of events, in accordance with the evolution of Nature's laws, forms the basis of their co-ordination. Education, to be exact—to stand radically true to Nature on an uncontrovertible platform—upon which all mankind may agree, co-operate, and internationally comprehend, must be established in the same route on which, to-day, all Science travels. Hence, the development of Education should follow the evolution of Mind. The course of Education is the mirror of Nature, and should be achromatic in its reflections of light. The direction of its instruction should be predicated upon the growth of the organic intellect.

The first feeble glimmerings of brain-work in the infant, in its instincts to get nutrition, are progressively fostered by the mother until it learns to feed alone; the first rays of Mind which kindle curiosity in the child are brightened by showing it noisy and glittering objects; the parent-puzzling boy, with his "whys" and "wherefores," is satisfied with lettered blocks, pictures, and puzzles, until, with growing brain and expanding



intelligence, he explores with his eyes the natural world around him, and finally, in manhood, seeks in books aid from his predecessors, aspiring to grasp in his comprehension all the forces in illimitable space. These, then, are the natural epochs of life's Education, and such the course to pursue in Man's tuition. The Education of THE PAST has shot wide of this mark.

How vain would be its recapitulation. Search the historic Schools of Philosophy. Look at the inflictions of religious and political powers!

But "the Now" is another era. The Present, in behalf of the Future, speaks with a loftier voice.

With Truth inscribed upon her banner, and Freedom emblazoned on her escutcheon, Science calmly but surely advances, without arrogance, yet, with a step in her march, accelerated beyond what has ever heretofore been known. Doubtless it was this progress in learning, this aspiration for freedom of thought, this expansive spirit of Science, which gave origin and impetus to the grand fusion of the divided German States into the great unified German Empire: for Germany, however it may be a People's Empire, in Science is Learning's Republic. The Catholic powers of Europe, jealous of this grand emancipation, fanned into action one great blow to crush the giant germ in its bud; and then, had Victory followed the armies of Napoleon III, for decades unnumbered would the Genius of Science have languished and withered in its Mediæval thralldom; but, thanks to the provisions and munitions of modern Science—the steamships, the railroads, the electric wires, and last, not least,

those gentle toys of modern skill—the mammoth guns, shells and cartridges—this doom was evaded and forbade.

This we believe to be the true *rationale*, why America favored less with its sympathy the cause of that noble nation, France, which we hope ever to love and admire. We have ventured these reflections, because it is from these national storehouses of learning and original research that the world now draws its scientific sustenance.

It is now conceded, we believe, to date the impetus thus received, at least in America, to the astonishing recent progress of exact Science, in all its departments, to about the year 1840. This date may not be precise, but it may well suit our purpose to adopt it.

From this period, then, the imperative demand has been heard throughout the Union for more knowledge, and, hence, for a higher grade of learning and greater facilities for teaching; without the latter, the former is unattainable. Lecturing from a rostrum for an hour, once, twice, or thrice, a week, no longer suffices. The necessity, combined with the ardor for more learning, compel, irresistibly, the aspirants to insist upon a practical instruction, in which all their senses—not only hearing, but sight by object-teaching, and tact by actual manipulation, rehearsals, laboratory work, clinical inspection, and surgical operations on the subject often repeated—may all unite and concentrate in the arduous work of attaining the modern grade of knowledge. Do American Colleges fill this programme? In the great majority of them—no! Can such colleges be produced? They can—but not

under the present system of free-and-easy Charters. Nowadays, a State Charter sanctions and sanctifies anything; an incompetent authority, for a few dollars, dispenses its Magna Charta. So long as a dozen individuals can buy a cheap Charter to run a College, and confer a Diploma of "M. D.," so long will true scientific Education languish, and the Schools of other Nations outrank and excel our own. In America, it is not the ability to learn, but the means which are wanted—not the *thirst*, but the *fountain* which fails. Such Schools are created to proclaim the merits of their "Professors," much more than to promote and gratify the yearning of the students. They depend upon their *capital in parole*, rather than their capital in bank—they vibrate the horn of self-laudation, but skimp parsimoniously the horn of plenty. The requisition in Medical Education, at the present time, calls for far more than this "voluntary association of five or more individuals," who may incorporate themselves by a State Charter, whether for profit or not. The chartering privilege should be restricted to such corporations only that can show a paid-up capital sufficient to provide a salary for its Professors, and furnish laboratories, equiped to illustrate their various lectures. Each Professor, in every branch, especially in Surgery and Anatomy, should be provided with one or more assistants, to "quiz," and to aid in the actual practice of the *minutiæ* of his department.

The noble endowment of the United States Government of the University of California places our favored State in the front line of educational improvement. When its comprehensive programme



shall come into full operation, no further Education Charters should be granted. Up to the present time, however, its Medical Collegiate Department, after its first inauguration, has been left to sink or swim, as it might. But for the munificent donation of Dr. Toland, the former alternative might have been its fate. We desire *Now*, that the treaty stipulations be fulfilled, and that the Medical Department be allowed all the advantages of its most favored collateral Colleges—the study of Man might even supersede the culture of the Soil, and take rank of the Agricultural pretenders. Hence the claim of Society is justified, that salaried Professors should be provided, who shall not be wearied with the toil, nor care-worn with the necessity of the practice of Medicine, but who shall devote their entire energy to their respective Chairs—Clinical Professors being limited to their Hospitals.

On the other hand to appreciate this high cultivation, only students should be matriculated who can present certificates of proficiency in the preparatory departments of Education, recognized or specified by the Regents of the University.

To attain this requisite perfection in Medical teaching, as we have sketched, a universal, generalized system, all of whose departments work harmoniously to form a unity in Science, becomes indispensable. To this end, we would advocate the creation of a Central National Institute or University, for the more ample instruction of graduates, and men already advanced in experience, who may desire to become Professors. But few are so generously endowed by Nature that they can suddenly leave a desultory and general



practice of Medicine, and promptly co-ordinate their knowledge to the systematic order and precision of a course of lectures. The transition from the work of silent thought and observation, to the loud and fluent allocution of the lecture-hall, is not so easy a task that the ambition *to do* can be instantly followed by the proficiency *to act*. From such a National Institute, then, it would be wise to select Professors for State Universities.

In recapitulation we would suggest, as a programme of Medical Education—and we only propose that which is perfectly feasible—and, moreover, that which the age we live in is imperiously demanding :

1. A National Institute for the highest standpoint in learning.

2. State Universities—not more than two, for emulation sake, in each State—endowed as before proposed.

3. Free instruction to the students or aspirants who shall possess the required attainments—showing but limited favor to a poor applicant, to boost him along because he may be poor ; nor any concession to the rich, because of their wealth.

4. A longer curriculum than is now required.

5. The formation of Medical Societies, for the mutual improvement of their members—for in Nature's School the wisest scholars are but students still.

6. The encouragement of numerous social Medical Clubs in the large cities.

7. The co-operation of the former (*i. e.*, 5 and 6) to maintain State Medical Societies as points of re-union, and through which to appoint State delegates to—

### 8. The American Medical Association.

If, now, to this system be added that of the Department—now almost of itself a specialty—of Hygienic prevention of disease by State, City, and County Boards of Health, all these converging upon a National Bureau of Public Health, we sincerely believe that Actuaries of Life Assurance Societies will soon be compelled to extend the limits of their policies, and reduce the premiums on their risks. When to these advantages is added the *free Education* of the students, then, and then only, will the self-advertising doctor-mills die out by *eremacausis*, and the Nation be provided with scientific Physicians. Then will a Diploma be the PROOF of a FACT, and be an assurance to the world that the aspirant to popular favor starts into his life's career with an Education which will fertilize his future experience, and give perfection to his future researches.

The prompt consummation of such reform is most anxiously awaited. In January, of 1849, the population of San Francisco did not exceed 1,000 persons. In 1877, there are 300,000 inhabitants. This Census will rapidly rise to 600,000. At this vast development of energy the Mind is overcome with astonishment. The grandeur of the educational prize absorbs the Thought. To San Francisco, if duly encouraged, the candidates for learning will flock from every shore and isle of the Pacific Ocean. Their numerous languages will melt into our own Anglo-Saxon; their divergent ideas will be transformed and concentrated upon our own American system. Our classes of students, as in Europe, will number from the hundreds to the thousand.

But as the invitation must precede its acceptance, so must the portals of the temple first be thrown open to receive the concourse of worshipers. As the beauty of the brilliant sunlight in the morning horizon, so is the promise of classic glory in the destiny of our rising State. Let, then, the consummation be promptly sought.





